

I Claim:

1. An aqueous composition for cleaning contact lenses, comprising an effective amount of an anionic chitosan derivative that is soluble in aqueous solutions at a pH of 6.5 to 8.5 and is capable of complexing with lysozyme as a result of ionic interactions, and an ophthalmically acceptable aqueous vehicle for said chitosan derivative.

2. A composition according to Claim 1, wherein the chitosan derivative has a molecular weight of 500 to 10,000,000 Daltons.

3. A composition according to Claim 1, wherein the chitosan derivative is selected from the group consisting of sulfuryl chitosan, phosphoryl chitosan, carboxymethyl chitosan, dicarboxymethyl chitosan, succinyl chitosan, and combinations thereof.

4. A composition according to Claim 1, wherein the chitosan derivative comprises carboxymethyl chitosan.

20 5. A composition according to Claim 1, wherein the composition is a multi-purpose solution for cleaning and disinfecting contact lenses.

6. A composition according to Claim 1, wherein the composition is a product for rewetting contact lenses.

7. A method of treating a contact lens, which comprises applying a cleaning composition to the lens, said composition comprising an effective amount of an anionic chitosan derivative that is soluble in aqueous solutions at a pH of 6.5 to 8.5 and is capable of complexing with lysozyme as a result of ionic interactions, and an ophthalmically acceptable aqueous vehicle for said chitosan derivative.

10 8. A method according to Claim 7, wherein the chitosan derivative has a molecular weight of 500 to 10,000,000 Daltons.

9. A method according to Claim 7, wherein the chitosan derivative is selected from the group consisting of sulfuryl chitosan, phosphoryl chitosan, 15 carboxymethyl chitosan, dicarboxymethyl chitosan, succinyl chitosan, and combinations thereof.

10. A method according to Claim 7, wherein the chitosan derivative comprises carboxymethyl chitosan.

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11. A method according to Claim 7, wherein the composition is a multi-purpose solution for cleaning and disinfecting contact lenses.

12. A method according to Claim 7, wherein the composition is a product for wetting contact lenses.